

ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Technical Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary

February 7, 2006
Ulster County Community College
Stone Ridge, NY

Members

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Present: | Joel B. Brink** | Town of Ulster |
| | Mike Campbell | Village of Saugerties |
| | Mircea Catona | UC Public Works Department |
| | James V. Dolaway* | Town of Wawarsing |
| | Dennis Doyle | UC Planning Board |
| | Steve Finkle** | City of Kingston |
| | Jack Hohman** | NYS Thruway Authority |
| | Cindy Lanzetta* | Town of Marlborough |
| | Nadine Lemmon** | Town of Gardiner |
| | Rich Peters | NYSDOT Region 8 |
| | Toni Roser** | City of Kingston CitiBus |
| | Jill Ross** | NYS Thruway Authority |
| | Cynthia Ruiz** | UC Area Transit |
| | Charles Schaller | UC Traffic Safety Board |
| | Bob Shepard | Town of Lloyd |
| | John Valk* | Town of Shawangunk |

Staff

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Present: | Marianne Davis | UC Planning Board |
| | Jean Gunsch | NYMTC – Region 8 MPO Staff |
| | Tom Mank | UCTC |
| | Bill Tobin | UCTC |

Others

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Present: | Maureen Brooks | Adirondack Trailways |
| | Barbara Budik | Saugerties Economic Development Council |
| | Lou Frangella | CSX Transportation |
| | Gilbert Hales | Town of Saugerties |
| | Nancy Hammond | Town of Lloyd |
| | Kathy Nolan | Town of Shandaken |
| | Myles Putman | Shuster Associates |
| | Tom Storey | NYSDOT Region 8 |
| | Ken Withers | R.L. Banks & Associates, Inc. |

⁺Permanent Voting Member

^{*}Current Voting Member (Until June 4, 2007)

^{**}Voting Proxy

[^]Advisory Member

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Doyle at 10:00 a.m. Those in attendance introduced themselves.

CALL FOR CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ms. Nolan stated she is concerned about a proposed roundabout at the intersection of Wittenburg Road and Route 212. She wanted to know what could be done to get the process opened up and would like to know what resources are available. Ms. Nolan stated that DOT has said it is still in design phase.

Mr. Peters stated this area was part of annual safety requirements and that Ms. Nolan should give him a call.

Mr. Schaller stated that the DOT and Ulster County have both looked at the situation due to continuous near misses at the intersection. He added that there have not been many crashes there but the ones that did occur were serious. Mr. Schaller stated that the roundabout is not the only solution and people should call him at the UC Traffic Safety Board.

Mr. Hales read a quote from the Draft UPWP on transportation program facilities pertaining to the promotion of multi-modal transportation planning practices.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Doyle asked for approval of the minutes from the November 1, 2005 meeting.

Motion to approve by Mr. Shepard, seconded by Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Tobin stated that a UCTC Passenger Rail Meeting Summary was not included in the agenda packet but is available upon request.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Doyle stated that a 'City of Kingston Intermodal Facility Site Location and Conceptual Design Analysis' request for proposals (RFP) is being prepared for advertisement. The RFP will be released mid February with a return date of late March.

Mr. Campbell stated the recent Saugerties Area Mobility Analysis (SAMA) Public Meeting was a success. Approximately 100 people attended. Mr. Campbell stated he was very pleased with the outcome of this meeting.

Mr. Doyle stated the Rail Trail Feasibility Public meeting is scheduled for February 9th from 7:00 – 9:00PM at the Olive Town Hall. We've had some unfortunate press coverage and have been getting e-mails about the need "keep the railroad" in the corridor.

Mr. Mank informed the Council that a second City of Kingston Route 32/Fair Street intersection study public meeting is scheduled for February 21 at the George Washington School.

Mr. Finkle said there is a possibly of additional paving and sidewalk repair near this intersection.

Ms. Ruiz stated there were problems with the buses as the new stop sign is too far back. She asked to be notified of any changes sooner as she herself informed the County's Safety Office.

Ms. Ruiz announced she would be getting together with Ms. Roser of Citibus to talk about coordinated public transit services.

Mr. Tobin stated the Mayor of Kingston said that doing nothing is not an option in terms of the Transit Systems Integration Analysis. He added that Walt Cherwony will be presenting the overall final report at the March 7, 2006 Policy Committee meeting.

Ms. Gunsch noted that project selection has been completed to allow for new funding for Adirondack Trailways. Mr. Tobin said a letter from Bob Dennison was enclosed in the agenda package explaining a minor TIP Amendment.

Mr. Tobin announced that he included a quarterly financial report (green sheet) in the agenda packet.

Mr. Doyle asked if there was a schedule for enhancement program. Mr. Peters said the announcement will be out soon and the intention is to work with MPOs to set up some briefing sessions to learn about what is involved and to assist in filling out applications.

Mr. Tobin asked Mr. Peters about the Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP). Mr. Peters stated the TEP is intended for things not generally done by the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) such as bikeways, trails, aesthetic enhancements such as plantings, repairing old historical structures tied to transportation like rail stations, drainage, sidewalks, view sheds, etc. Mr. Doyle said the Technical Committee members should go back to their communities and think about applications for Enhancements and TIP projects.

Mr. Doyle stated that UCTC members may meet later in the year to organize a sub-committee to evaluate and rank 2006 Enhancement and TIP applications. Mr. Tobin stated that there will be a significant time commitment from those wanting to participate. Mr. Doyle stated that there is methodology in place to rank the TIP projects using a "point system". Ms. Budik asked when the applications will be available. Mr. Doyle said there is no set date yet but he believed it would be mid summer 2006.

Ms. Lanzetta asked when TEP information/applications would be available. Mr. Doyle said the UCTC will make this information available as soon as possible and may be available electronically on the UCTC web website.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2006-1: Year 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment.

Mr. Tobin stated the enclosed resolution proposes an amendment to the Long Range Transportation Plan clarifying the Council's position and support for Saugerties suggestion to add language to the LRTP noting the possibility of double-tracking in the CSX corridor. He wondered if changing the language to "adding capacity" instead of the words "double track" would be more suitable.

Mr. Frangella stated that he has no knowledge of CSX having future plans to double track the whole River Line, but they are adding 3 track sidings including 2 to be completed this year. Mr. Tobin stated CSX's long-term vision, as presented at the State Department of Transportation Commission Hearings, is to double track the River Line.

Mr. Frangella stated that CSX has no plans for a shared passenger rail concept in this corridor.

Mr. Doyle asked if anyone wanted to comment on capacity additions or double tracking language found in the Resolution. He stated with capacity additions the safety and security of all affected communities should be properly addressed. Ms. Budik suggested both the additional of side tracking and the overall double tracking language should be mentioned. Mr. Tobin stated that leaving the statement as presented appears to address both issues and seems to be the most durable language to use. The UCTC can revisit this policy statement at the next Long Range Transportation Plan update in approximately four years.

Mr. Doyle stated that staff will pass the amendment on to the Policy Committee given the consensus of the Technical Committee.

RESOLUTION 2006-2: Functional Classification System Map Update

Mr. Mank distributed handouts with showing modifications to the existing Ulster County functional classification system map approved by FHWA. Mr. Mank stated that this Functional class map identifies which roads will be federal aid eligible for future Federal funding.

Mr. Mank presented a map showing a visual representation and a list describing each segment to add. He stated that when the Ulster County MPO was created, roads that were previously rural were upgraded by NYSDOT if they fell into the new Census 2000 Urbanized Area. Mr. Mank stated that if recommended, the changes will be forwarded to the Policy Committee for their review and adoption, then submitted formally to NYSDOT, then submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for final approval.

Mr. Tobin stated that all parties review and adopt the changes. The Federal Highway Administration makes the final decision to approve any revisions to the federal functional classification map.

Mr. Finkle asked why First Avenue in the City of Kingston was on the list and what criteria are used to determine changes. Mr. Doyle answered that the Council includes community-to-community collectors. First Avenue appears to serve this function in that

quadrant of the City because it provides a connection back to Delaware Avenue, back to the City of Kingston, and to Route 32.

Mr. Mank stated that it's not the amount of traffic volume as much as road functionality that determines a road's functional class.

Mr. Putnam stated the yellow line on map on First Avenue appears to create a functional loop back to the City of Kingston. Mr. Doyle stated that was correct.

Mr. Putnam asked if Mr. Doyle had included his comments on jurisdictional items. Mr. Mank said his comments have been incorporated into the handouts.

Mr. Doyle asked Mr. Putnam to introduce himself. Mr. Putnam stated he works for Shuster Associates and that he provided comments to the staff concerning the revisions to the County's roadway functional classification system map.

Mr. Valk asked if the map included only roads within the County. He stated that Albany Post Road should go to the County Line not all the way to Route 52. Mr. Doyle said that was a good catch and our submittal should show Albany Post Road ending at the County Line.

Ms. Lanzetta asked when these changes would be made. Mr. Doyle stated he did not know the timetable and asked Mr. Peters when the results would be back. Mr. Peters answered probably in a few months. Mr. Mank stated it takes a while to get through the system but much of the work is mostly completed.

Mr. Finkle made a motion to approve the Resolution, which was seconded by Ms. Ruiz. A consensus was achieved.

RESOLUTION 2006-3: Draft Year 2006-2007 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Tobin stated the UPWP is developed every year based on the state fiscal year 2006-2007 beginning April 1 and ending March 31. Mr. Tobin presented the draft planning work programmed proposed.

Mr. Campbell commented on the City of Kingston Intermodal Transit Facility and asked if the word intermodal doesn't include more than just the City of Kingston. He asked why it isn't called an Ulster County Intermodal Transit Facility. Mr. Doyle replied "yes", the Transit Systems Integration Analysis was performed on a countywide scale and included many communities. The Long Range Plan identified the existing City of Kingston intermodal facility as a high priority project because of the facility's inadequacy to meet the current and future public transit needs compared to the population it serves.

Ms. Ruiz stated that several sites were discussed within the study but Kingston was the primary location. She said that Kingston will be a primary hub.

Mr. Campbell said the study seems to be very Kingston-focused and asked if interconnection to other sites may be a follow-up work item next year. Mr. Tobin said we will talk about a wish list of projects as we don't have the resources in the current work program.

Mr. Doyle stated Ulster County is looking for funds to complete a countywide economic development strategies study. Mr. Doyle stated the Ulster County Planning Board would like to take a portion of the UCTC's work program (\$10,000) to look at links between economic development and transportation. The overall study is expected to cost approximately \$160,000 -180,000.

Mr. Tobin said UCTC staff still awaits word from NYSDOT regarding the Route 209 multi-municipal transportation study to hear how the scope of work is coming along and funding arrangements. Mr. Doyle added NYSDOT has offered to pay for this study.

Ms. Lemmon asked about rural membership and wanted to know how much of the UPWP funds benefits rural towns. Mr. Doyle replied that transit planning work and the traffic counts in the 209 corridor directly benefits those towns. Mr. Tobin added trail planning to the list and stated we try to address the concerns of as many municipalities as possible.

Ms. Lemmon asked about shared cost initiatives and what kind of representation do municipalities have. Mr. Doyle said these projects are hosted by individual MPOs. Mr. Tobin noted there is a teleconference every other month among the MPOs to discuss progress of these studies. Mr. Doyle stated it is similar to a "best practices" approach to coordinate activities. Administration costs for 13 MPOs working together are combined to save money. Interactions of MPOs with NYSDOT are ongoing. All MPOs agree upon these shared cost activities.

Ms. Lemmon asked if all MPOs contribute the same amount. Mr. Tobin noted that UCTC contributes a small portion of funds which are "skimmed" off the total allocation of planning funds provided by the Federal Highway Administration to NYSDOT before final allocations are made to the 13 MPOs. Mr. Doyle stated we could get her that figure of the UCTC's contribution.

Ms. Ruiz asked Ms. Lemmon if there was a specific need that wasn't being addressed. Ms. Lemmon said not at the moment, but wondered if it's not cheaper to provide funds before there is a problem. Mr. Doyle agreed and stated that was one of the reasons for the Route 209 corridor study.

Mr. Valk stated that other rural municipalities have different needs from City of Kingston and sometimes feel overlooked. Mr. Doyle said one thought is to initiate transportation and land use "linkage studies" which can be short, fairly inexpensive studies looking at sections of a community's transportation issues. The Albany MPO does this kind of work. The community provides a portion of the funding to complete these types of studies.

Ms. Ross added the CDTC has a very successful linkage program. They see a mechanism for best practice is to share linkage studies. For example, when a community or NYSDOT makes a recommendation for a project – the project element aspects identified related to access management come up in linkage studies. Opportunities are identified prior to NYSDOT staff going forward. The Albany area is beginning to see the benefits of these linkage studies.

Mr. Tobin stated that that UCTC staff will be visiting rural communities for public input concerning trail planning efforts.

Mr. Doyle stated that staff has also discussed educational programs. The county Planning Board sponsors several educational seminars annually but not many MPOs do educational work. Does the Council want to fund educational work in the communities?

Ms. Ruiz asked if this wasn't a function of the Planning Department. Mr. Doyle stated it is and it isn't. What we are looking to accomplish is a fundamental link between transportation and land use.

Ms. Ruiz asked if educational programs could be a shared cost initiative to offer Town Boards? Mr. Doyle said it would be more than that.

Ms. Ruiz added that as elected officials change the information must be taught all over again. Ms. Lanzetta noted that new elected officials can incorporate positive change in a community compared to people who have served for a while may tend to settle in.

Motion by Mr. Valk and Seconded by Mr. Shepard to send the Draft 2006-2007 UPWP to the Policy Committee for review and consideration. All were in favor.

Year 2005 Ulster County Traffic Count Final Report

Mr. Mank stated the individual 2005 traffic counts provided in the Final Report were approved by NYSDOT prior to publishing this report. For those interested, the UCTC website also shows the location for the 2006 counts which will be done in May of this year. He said that, like NYSDOT, these are permanent count locations. Counts will be taken every 3 years and then repeated. The information will be useful for the Council to identify trends and help calibrate the Council's travel demand forecasting model.

Mr. Doyle asked how many counts were taken this past year. Mr. Mank replied that 79 counts were taken last year (2005) and 86 have been scheduled for 2006.

Ms. Ruiz asked if we could see historical data. Mr. Mank replied that we have some county and old state information, but have no formal historical count database at the current time.

Mr. Doyle stated that Mr. Catona provided Mr. Mank with data going back to 1991. He also stated a background growth rate on corridors shows 6 – 20% annual – 3-7 years – typically it's 1.5 to 2 %. The Council will count vehicles in central part of Ulster County next year and the western one-third of Ulster County and the City of Kingston in 2007.

Mr. Valk asked if the intersection area of Route's 300 and 208 have been counted? Or will it be counted in the future? NYSDOT may have to take care of this count location since it's at an intersection of State Roads. The Council doesn't want to overlap duplicate the State's efforts.

Mr. Peters announced that Draft Statewide Transportation Plan is available on the State DOT's web site. Comments are due by February 24, 2006 and can be submitted online.

Also, a Hudson Valley Trail Guide is published. Contact NYSDOT for a copy of this brochure.

City of Kingston/Town of Ulster CSX Railroad Corridor Quiet Zone and Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Analysis

Mr. Doyle introduced Mr. Ken Withers of R.L. Banks & Associates. Mr. Withers stated that a Draft Final Report has been prepared and presented the study's conclusions and recommendations.

Mr. Tobin stated the reason for doing the study was that the City of Kingston asked the Council for assistance. When the topic was first presented to the Council, Mr. Wadnola, former Town of Ulster Supervisor, asked for Ulster to be included. Saugerties could also benefit from a similar type of study.

Mr. Finkle asked if there is a way the Foxhall Avenue crossing gate could be manually lifted. Mr. Frangella stated the conductor could do that.

Ms. Lanzetta asked about pedestrian crosswalk issues. Mr. Withers responded to say legal issues to cross where street crosses is permitted but not elsewhere or along tracks.

Mr. Tobin stated the final report, incorporating public comments, will be posted on the UCTC's web page only, unless UCTC members request a final copy.

Mr. Schaller stated the idea of a Quiet Zone is good, however, if people continue to walk along or within the corridor, locomotives still need to sound the horn leaving the City and residents right where they started minus 2.5 million dollars.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.